

ATTACHMENT 1: Letter from Protect Scenic 101

Protect Scenic 101 (PS 101)



September 25, 2016

James Bergman, Director of Planning and Building
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SUBJECT: SCENIC HIGHWAY DESIGNATION FOR HIGHWAY 101
2017 PLANNING WORK PROGRAM, 10/11 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HEARING

Dear Jim,

Now it is imperative for Planning to prepare a CA Scenic Highway application. A designated CA Scenic Highway for 101 would increase tourism, which is anticipated to provide an offset to the imminent reduction in income from Diablo.

You mentioned to Jamie Lopes and me when we met earlier this year of your intent to bring forward to the Supervisors a proposal for part-time staff, such as an intern, to prepare an application for a 101 Scenic Highway. We strongly encourage your follow-through with this. Last October, the Board of Supervisors supported inclusion of a Scenic Highway in Planning's future work program. The Board's action followed demonstrated community support for a Scenic Highway and confirmation from the City of San Luis Obispo of its policy support. For expediency in achieving Scenic Highway status, PS101's recommendation was, and is, priority for the 101 stretch between Atascadero and Pismo Beach. This is because both City of SLO and County policies explicitly support Scenic Highway status for 101.

Scenic Highway status indirectly benefits tourism by bolstering potential for eliminating billboards. It is important to consider that our County competes for tourists with Santa Barbara County, which eliminated its billboards, and with Monterey County, which eliminated a majority of theirs. Without billboards, natural scenic beauty, revered by visitors (and also residents) is restored. A Scenic Highway designation is essential for such time as funding to buy-out billboards again becomes available. Also, downed billboards along a Scenic Highway generally cannot be resurrected. Both County and City of SLO policies support elimination of billboards within the Highway 101 approaches to the City.

Local pride accompanying the poppy signs which represent Scenic Highway status is another benefit of Scenic Highway status.

Please know we are available to provide additional information. Suggestions you might have for our advancing Scenic Highway status, as well as billboard elimination, would be welcomed and appreciated.

Best regards,

Sherri Danoff, Coordinator
Jamie Lopes, Government Outreach

C: PS101 Steering Committee